



# Writing from Experience and in Response to Text

This instructional model asks children to write in response to read-aloud texts with themes that address standards in other subjects. Here, we've selected texts that address social studies and character education standards. If your students find this helpful, you can re-use the 11-step process to write your own variations using texts that address any standards you're working on. Students will benefit most when this instructional model is embedded in a healthy process-writing program.

## Why go this route?

- Because students need more than “opportunities to write.” They need direct instruction, scaffolding feedback, and published authors to emulate.
- Because comprehension, writing, and conversation skills don't have to wait for reading skill—they can be learned in response to oral text as well, and this can HELP reading fluency.
- Because using writing to think about other subjects “kills two standards with one stone.”

## You'll know you've arrived when...

- Teachers are using Read-Alouds as literary models for student writing.
- Teachers are modeling writing, correction, and revision.
- Teachers are conferencing individually with writers.
- Teachers are assessing student work against standards and saving work and assessment in a cumulative portfolio for each student.
- Teachers are collaborating at grade level to analyze student work.

## Construction Zone

### *It's About TIME*


- Working through this sequence of instruction—modelling, practicing, peer editing, and conferencing—will require daily instruction periods of 45-60 minutes for 1–2 days/weeks.
- Revisiting the sequence four times/year (Nov., Jan., March and May) will reinforce the skills, apply them to different themes and texts, and allow assessment of cumulative progress.

### *Potential COSTS*

- Two or three trade books can be purchased if your basal does not have suitable stories (\$10–\$20).
- Classroom equipment such as flipcharts and an overhead projector will help but are optional.
- There may be a cost for copying the grade-level guide and selected loose inserts for each teacher undertaking this instructional model.

## The Process

*A step-by-step guide  
to using writing in response  
to text to address other  
standards*

**NOTE:** Steps marked with a  are accompanied by one or more inserts, included in this packet.

**NOTE:** These lessons are based on the Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations for English Language Arts. Please use the crosswalk documents on the MDE website to connect with the current Michigan standards (Common Core State Standards).

Michigan Content Expectations/Core Content Standards Kindergarten-Second Grade ELA Crosswalks [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/K-2\\_ELA\\_357700\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/K-2_ELA_357700_7.pdf).

Michigan Content Expectations/Core Content Standards-Fifth Grade ELA Crosswalks [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/3-5\\_ELA\\_3357701\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/3-5_ELA_3357701_7.pdf).

These lessons are also based on the Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations for Social Studies.

- 1 Choose a theme** or use the prototype theme for your grade level.  
We offer a starter-set of prototype lessons ready-to-use for grades K-3 in this packet. Each is built around a theme that allows instruction in social studies or character education. Within each grade-level prototype, INSERT for Step 1 identifies the applicable standards. If the model proves useful, you can apply it to your own themes to address standards your district requires or that your students need.
- 2 Select four related texts.**  
INSERT for Step 2 (in each grade-level prototype) recommends text selections that are found in common basals. These selections are also available as trade books.
- 3 Set aside enough time.**  
INSERT for Step 3 is a worksheet that asks when (over a 1-2 week period) you can set aside 45–60 minutes of daily instruction time to work through Steps 4–11.
- 4 Ask the children to make a connection to their own lives.**  
INSERT for Step 4 guides you through introducing the theme and helping children explore it in relation to their own lives. From this exploration, invite them to write (or draw) their connections. Use “Picture Walk” or “Read-Aloud” techniques (see loose inserts) with your first text selection.
- 5 Model writing expectations** by writing an essay yourself while thinking aloud.  
Use an overhead projector or a flip chart so students can see you add, cross-out, re-think and chain ideas. INSERT for Step 5 guides you through. Save your product for editing in Step 7.
- 6 Have students draft stories** based on the theme.
- 7 Model correction and revision** using the teacher draft from Step 5.  
INSERT for Step 7 offers a checklist of revisions from which to choose a focus.
- 8 Facilitate peer response** and hold writing conferences to offer teacher consultation about the student drafts.  
Learning how to give feedback teaches speaking skills. INSERTS for Step 8 suggest questions and forms for both student and teacher responses.
- 9 Read aloud and ask students to respond.**  
Read aloud a second text connected to the theme. Next use higher-level questions to lead a discussion and give students time to write. Use an “author chair” to have students read their writing and guide them in giving each other specific feedback. See Insert for Step 9.
- 10 Deepen understanding** with cross-text comparisons.  
Work through a third and fourth text one at a time. Then use worksheets suggested in INSERT for Step 10 to guide students through making cross-text comparisons.
- 11 Assess learning results** against Michigan’s MLPP rubric for your grade level.  
Save products and assessments for individual students and aggregate classroom-level results for collaborative discussion with fellow teachers. INSERTS A-D for Step 11 lead you through several elements of this work.

## Getting more mileage from using writing in response to text

*How using writing to address other standards benefits your school in regard to the following initiatives:*

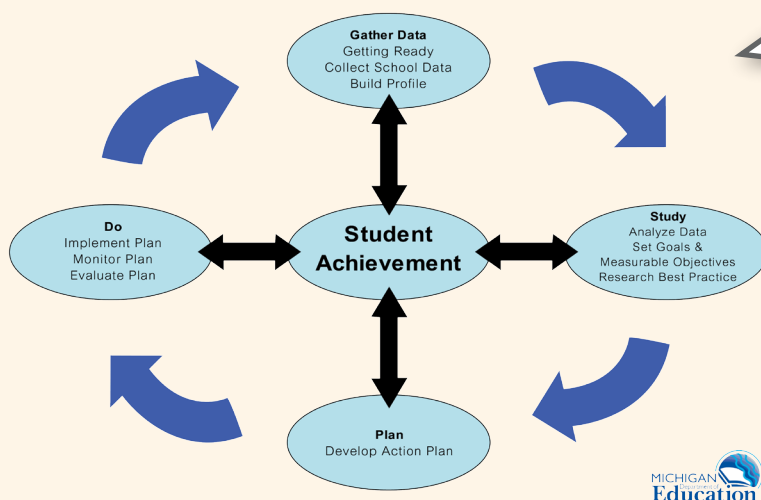
### **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)**

- Reading and writing skills are among the fundamental student achievements states are required to measure. Demonstrating progress toward helping ALL children learn is the cornerstone of making Adequate Yearly Progress. This instructional model is a systematic way to guide each child's writing and assess it individually so instruction can respond to remaining needs.

### **State Accreditation System**

- Using writing, reading, and listening as part of instruction about science or social studies texts is a powerful way to accomplish two standards at once.

### **Michigan Continuous School Improvement Process (Mi-CSI) Michigan School Improvement Framework**



This packet addresses teaching writing using models of best practice. Selecting the practices that will have the most impact on student achievement is a critical step of your school improvement planning process.



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## Resources

### Books, Articles, Websites

#### Classroom Instruction

##### That Works

Robert Marzano, Debra Pickering, Jane Pollock. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2001.

The authors examine decades of research findings to distill nine proven strategies.

##### Scaffolding Young Writers— A Writers' Workshop Approach

Linda J. Dorn and Carla Soffos. Stenhouse Publishing, 2001.

Linking assessment to instruction, the authors present a detailed plan for implementing a writers' workshop in grades K-3.

##### Experiment with Fiction

Donald Graves. Heinemann, 1989.

Children reading and writing narrative fictional stories should be part of every literate classroom. The author guides teachers and children through this process.

##### Mosaic of Thought

Ellin Keene, Susan Zimmermann. Heinemann, 1997.

Suggests classroom comprehension strategies that will help students use processes to deeply understand what they have read.

#### Teaching Written Response to Text: Constructing Quality Answers to Open-Ended Comprehension Questions

Nancy N. Boyles. Maupin House Publishing, 2002.

##### **M.O.R.E. Portal**

Michigan Online  
Resources for Educators.

<http://more.mel.org/>.

Locate lesson plans and curriculum aids that are searchable by subject or state standard.

##### **The Teaching for Learning Framework**

<http://www.teachingforlearning.org/>

The Teaching for Learning Framework, a project of the Michigan Department of Education – Office of Education Improvement and Innovation, was created to support effective instruction in challenging content across all grade levels and content areas.

##### **Michigan LearnPort**

<http://www.learnport.org>

Michigan LearnPort provides online learning solutions for educators: Access high-quality online courses and resources, meet professional development requirements, earn SB-CEUs and more.

### People

Intermediate School Districts/RESAs can serve as a resource.

#### **For more information, contact:**

Michigan Department of Education

Office of Education  
Improvement and Innovation  
517-241-3147

School Improvement Unit  
517-373-8480

Curriculum and Instruction Unit  
517-241-4285

Office of Assessment  
and Accountability  
517-373-0048

Office of Early Childhood  
and Family Services  
517-241-3592

Office of Field Services  
517-373-3921

Office of Professional Preparation  
and Teacher Certification  
517-373-6505

Office of Special Education  
and Early Intervention Services  
517-373-9433

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